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ABSTRACT

The Learning Resource Center at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical Institute (WITI) conducted a survey of 100 businesses and industries in Ashland, Wisconsin, in order to determine the perceived need for a shared informational media center to be used for workshops, training sessions, and in-service meetings. The survey instrument solicited information on current and projected staff training efforts, the use of audio-visual materials in staff training, periodical subscriptions, the purchase of reference materials, interest in resource speakers and/or the provision of meeting rooms for training purposes, and the amount of money spent annually for educational materials. Major findings, based on an 80% response rate, indicate that 72.5% of the businesses were engaged in staff training and that 34.8% anticipated an expansion of this role. Most respondents (68.1%) favored the use of audio-visual materials if available, but 34.8% owned no audio-visual hardware or software. While 87% subscribed to professional magazines and 84% purchased technical reference materials, only 14.5% spent over $799 per year for educational materials. In addition to presenting the survey findings, the study report examines the growing need to train employees in their work duties and in safety procedures. The materials and facilities of WITI's Learning Resource Center that could be used in developing the shared center are also described. (JP)

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Vocational Learning Centers:
A Link to Business and Industry

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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VOCATIONAL LEARNING CENTERS: A LINK TO BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

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PROBLEM

Since the Learning Resource Center at the Ashland Campus-WITI began serving the staff and students in 1974, an increasing number of area business, industry and agency representatives have requested materials and equipment for use in workshops, training sessions and in-service meetings.

Human relations and communications films and books are requested as often as the technical materials. Many times the only need is the proper projector for screening media prepared by corporations or agencies: Often the requirement is as basic as a quiet meeting room.

Expanding technology and heightened societal responsibilities have cast employers in the role of educators. It is a distinct possibility that the training/orientation periods afforded an employee will become increasingly longer and more comprehensive. In many instances these periods have evolved from initial familiarization sessions to a continuous educational process of job acclimation.

BACKGROUND

Anthony E. Schwaller, Professor in the College Of Industry-St. Cloud State, St. Cloud, Minnesota defines three major educational/training needs generated by business/industry:

1. To accommodate the turnover and growth in personnel.
2. To accommodate changes in knowledge and skills required by a company and its employees.
3. To improve the skills and performance of present employees in their jobs. [1].

Regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 accentuate the need for organized and on-going employee training.

It is estimated that OSHA coverage applies to four million establishments employing in the region of sixty million people.

Failure to comply with OSHA's federally controlled safety regulations holds severe penalties, so conducting safety meetings has taken on new importance. 2.

Loss prevention consultant for Olin Corporation, Alan L. Kling has stated:

> "To meet the far-reaching and growing demands of all the safety and health legal requirements with which industry must now contend, broad training programs are of inestimable value.
>
> Experience has shown that the most effective method of communicating this information and improving safety is through organized training." 3.

So not only is it necessary to train employees in their work duties, but government regulatory agencies, trade societies, efficiency experts and company psychologists suggest that training and in-service meetings are needed in many areas ranging from safety to company policy. The desired result is increased efficiency and production.

Following the need to provide training/education is the need for training/education materials. Coupled with the research tools inherent to all businesses, this materials need produces an impressive list of print and non-print media required or desired for a successful operation.

There is a constant need for reference materials to refer to certain technical procedures; check specifications or tables; compile statistics for feasibility or marketing studies or for federal project writing; locate addresses of manufacturers or federal/state government offices; or to research laws.

Corresponding to the materials need is the desirability of a facility conducive to study, with the possibility of private rooms or educational carrels equipped with audio-visual hardware for individualized training.

Providing these informational tools and services has become very costly.

> "It is estimated that, in toto, over $4 billion is spent annually on education and training in the private industrial and business sector across the nation." [4]

Henry Ruark of Chicago Learning Media Associates, writing in Technical Photography, Sept., 1979, compares the 1978 expenditures fcr audio-viausl software. He found that business and industry spent 2.5 billion, while educational institutions spent a little more than half that amount with 1.69 billion. [5]

In view of these statistics it appears that education is big business and vice versa.

RELATED INFORMATION

The business and education indexes reveal little about what the business community is doing to alleviate their training problems.

Obviously, large companies with unlimited funds are able to hire professionals to design and conduct their training. Many companies have created Training Manager or Education Director positions. As the production, processing or distribution of information goods and services grows, more teachers may forsake the classroom for the lucrative business world.

Two relevant articles were printed in the January 1980 issue of Kappan: "Speculations On The Meaning Of The Trend Toward Corporation Education", by Russell C. Doll [6] and "Corporate Training: A Career For Teachers", by Gary J. Corrigan.[7] Both depict the emerging need for professional direction of employee training.

C. Richard Anderson, Training Manager for Mobil Chemical Company recently published a book, "OSHA And Accident Control Through Training". Chapters are devoted to programmed individualized learning and conducting safety conferences. A large section of the book discusses learning principles and methods as related to safety training. Mr. Anderson also lists materials available: i.e. Safety slide programs (35mm) produced by

the National Safety Council.[8]

Private media production companies have discovered the market for training materials.

VCI, Incorporated of Minneapolis has produced and distributed a multi-media training program called, "Supervision: Seeing And Solving People Problems". It consists of eight thirty minute video cassettes which depict people problems occurring in various work situations. [9]

Each participant has a workbook which directs discussion, private study and group exercises. The program requires one-half inch color video cassette equipment and sells for approximately $4000.00.

Resources For Education and Management, Inc. has announced its new color catalog with more than thirty different audio-visual programs for supervisory and management training, instructor training, communications and sales training listed in it. All their programs are available in 35mm filmstrips, 35mm slides, or video cassette formats. [10]

These materials are relevant for any business or industry since they are not concerned with technical skills, but explore working with others in order to become more effective in the "people" side of a job.

Six hundred Fiat dealers through-out the U.S. and Canada have purchased video cassette tape components for use in sales training, mechanic training, consumer messages and for top management presentations.

The controller/indexer feature of this A/V package provides "interactive video" which allows trainees to actively participate in multiple-choice tests and other such programmed materials.[11]

> "The overall benefit of the Video-dex system to Fiat is that it implements corporate communications, sales training, and p-o-p promotion that are uniform and standard from one end of the continent to the other. There is much less likelihood of misunderstandings or major variations from one dealership to the next." [12]

These publications and new hardware augur a growing

realization on the part of executives that effective training demands a sophisticated and professional approach.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

Ashland, Wisconsin is the largest city in a five county area. Besides Indianhead Technical Institute, a four year liberal arts college, Northland, is located in the city. Ashland also boasts a fine public library which serves a five county area.

Both the college and city libraries have fairly extensive collections but with few volumes in the technical category and little or no A/V software or hardware available. Both facilities are crowded and inadequate for private or group study.

Relatively large distances isolate Ashland from other urban centers likely to have technical libraries. Chicago is 475 miles to the south; Milwaukee 380 miles, Madison 300, Minneapolis/St Paul 215.

To determine what education/training Ashland area businesses are handling, interviews were conducted with representatives of three major employers.

Memorial Medical Center at Ashland has 400 employees and spends over $1000.00 per year on reference and educational media. They own a full complement of audio-visual projectors, have their own medical library with librarian and have hired departmental education directors.

Helen Olson, Education Director For Nurses, explained that most of her work results from the requirements of the Joint Commission For Accreditation Of Hospitals. She must prepare monthly safety and infection meetings, orientation programs for new nursing staff members, arrange CPR training and provide in-service sessions on all new equipment.

Whereas much of the training centers around hospital policies and procedures, vendor materials and resource speakers are also used. An orientation manual has been locally developed.

Lake Superior District Power Company emplcys 300 people and also spends over $1000.00 per year on reference and educational

media.

Lynn Davis, Personnel Director, mentioned the impact of OSHA and the resulting safety meetings. She also arranges occasional secretarial workshops.

The company owns an impressive array of audio-visual projectors and accompanying software. Much of their educational material is provided by various organizations such as Edison Electrical Institute, Wisconsin Utilities, etc. They do not have a staff person directly responsible for purchasing, cataloging and circulating educational materials.

The American Can Company employs 210 people and spends from $500.00-$800.00 per year on reference and education materials.

Although they own 16mm, slide and video projectors, their software is limited to video and audio cassettes. A secretary manages the media in addition to her other duties.

American Can Company provides their branch offices with "A Corporate Manual Of Education Programs" and an Audio Cassette Library Catalog. Some material is also provided by vendors.

Informal conversations indicate that three basic training problems confront area employers:

1. Lack of reference materials and audio-visual software/hardware - Small companies don't have the money to purchase complete media capabilities for their private use.
2. Lack of time - Most secretaries or personnel people don't have the time for ordering materials or keeping the media current and accessible.
3. Lack of expertise - These same secretaries or personnel people are not trained in media research and ordering procedures, or in cataloging and circulation. This means that if the company does have the funds to purchase materials the collection many times is incomplete, outdated or unorganized, rendering it inaccessible i.e., useless.

The concept of pooling or networking materials and equipment is a possible solution. It would save time and money by avoiding duplication, while presenting a broader spectrum of media for training purposes.

In July, 1980, a survey was prepared and distributed through the Learning Resource Center at WITI - Ashland, to determine if area businesses and industries indicate a need or favor the establishment of a center for pooling informational media and/or equipment.

One hundred surveys were sent, eighty returned, representing an 80% response. Eleven of this number returned the forms as not applicable.

Tabulations of the 69 completed forms produced the following results:

1. 72.5% are engaged in staff training of some form.
2. 34.8% anticipated an expansion of the training role.
3. 34.8% owned no audio-visual hardware.
4. 40.6% owned no audio-visual software.
5. 68.1% favored using audio-visual materials and equipment if available.
6. 87% subscribed to professional magazines & publications.
7. 84% purchase technical reference materials.
8. 50.7% must update the reference materials yearly.
9. 44.9% had a staff person directly responsible for purchasing, cataloging and circulation educational materials.
10. 65.7% were interested in resource speakers.
11. 63.8% were interested in meeting rooms.
12. 14.5% spent $800.00 or over per year for educational materials.

A complete tabulation of the questionnaire and a list of the respondents are included in the appendices.

Some interesting conclusions can be drawn from the previous data and from reading the surveys.

1. Many businesses have access to professionally prepared audio-visual materials, but don't own the projectors.

The Ashland County Sheriff, Don Wilmot, commented -

"There is a definite need for both equipment and resource materials. On occasion we are able to have access to resource materials but we, at present, do not have the equipment to show the materials. The major part of our training is done on the inservice basis which is generally conducted by the Department of Justice, Division of Law Enforcement Services. The question of how much we would be able to work together in the future would depend on WITI's capabilities, I certainly am interested in possibly using your facility as a resource for any materials or training efforts in the future."

2. There is some confusion as to what training is expected, needed and already being done in the area.

Several school districts responded that staff training and media reciprocity was not applicable for their situations. They either ignored or are unaware of the fact that, a. WITI's human relations materials have been used extensively for teacher in-service and alternate education programs. b. WITI has provided resource people, facilities and training materials for many hot lunch cook workshops. c. High school contract classes (welding and machine tool) are taught at WITI using learning center materials and equipment.

A few government agencies felt that the concept, "was not for them", yet reflected in other areas of the survey that there was a great deal of duplication of print, non-print and hardware between their offices and counterparts with similar missions.

One state agency worker, who asked to remain anonymous, stated - "Half the time I don't know what to do in this job, and people rely on me, but I havn't been well trained at all- The above materials (survey listings) sure would help!"

3. A surprising number of businesses indicated that they owned or were interested in video equipment. There are, at present, several types of reel-to-reel and cassette videotape components: The new videodisc equipment and software, although not as yet popular, are purported to be even more versatile and effective.

In view of the cost of these systems, some coordination on the part of prospective consumers could prevent duplication.

4. A majority of the businesses polled would favor some direction in locating and organizing materials/equipment. Comments extracted from surveys are:

Robert Wingert, Assistant Executive Director for Memorial Medical Center -

"While we are quite well stocked on hardware, there are yet some pieces of equipment, especially video cassette types, that we do not have access to. It seems there are three types of video cassette media available. We would be interested in software, particularly as it relates to supervisory and manage-

ment. I might also add that sharing media certainly would be an economical approach for all of us in this area and we would be very happy to participate in your program. Unfortunately, much of our media is of interest only to us. However, some could probably be used with your medical programs."

Ashland Fire Chief, Gerald Giese -

"The fire department uses a lot of equipment from WITI at the present time. I think an expansion of training tools would be a great help to the whole area."

Craig Kronstedt, Education/Prevention Coordinator for Bayfield County Alcohol and Drug Center -

"With the tightening of the economy it makes a good deal of sense to share equipment, especially equipment which is only used occasionally. We are very interested in this idea and could make good use of shared projectors, video-tape equipment, etc."

Ron Lockwood, Program Director for Unified Services Board, Ashland, Iron, Price Counties -

"Very good idea. Our agency has a responsibility to perform a public education and information function in the area of mental disabilities, and a staff training and development function. We havn't done much of either yet, but we would certainly like to coordinate our activities with your office and make use of any specialized communication equipment available at WITI."

Raymond Ferrando, Executive Vice President of the Northern State Bank -

"I have used some of the material you already have from time to time and certainly appreciate its availability to us! Thank you!"

Richard Wygonik, CETA Intake Coordinator for the Red Cliff Tribal Council -

"With the current budget cuts for most of the programs the idea of media/equipment sharing sounds very interesting."

<u>POSSIBLE SOLUTION</u>

The Learning Resource Center at WITI maintains current research materials:

1. Special relevant reference books, i.e.
   a. "Wisconsin Manufacturer's Directory"
   b. "Thomas Directory Of Manufacturers"
   c. "Trade Names Dictionary"
   d. "Dow-Jones Irwin Business Almanac"
   e. "Occupational Outlook Handbook"

2. General reference tools, i.e.
   a. "Wisconsin Blue Book"
   b. "U.S. Zip Code Directory"
   c. Various dictionaries, atlases, encyclopedias.
   d. Telephone directories for most major cities in U.S.
3. Instructional-programmed materials for training or research, i.e.
   a. Workbooks
   b. Handbooks
   c. Training manuals
4. Professional periodicals and publications, i.e.
   a. Welding Design and Fabrication
   b. American Machinist
   c. Journal Of Accountancy
   d. Advertising Age
   E. The Wall Street Journal

Much of the media purchased for use in WITI's training programs is commensurate with business training needs. Shop safety films, first aid training films, human relations and communications programs, bank teller training modules and management/supervisory programs are examples of audio-visual software now getting extensive circulation outside the immediate school unit.

These courtesies might be fostered and expanded into a collaborative effort mutually beneficial to both the school and the community. The Wisconsin Indianhead Technical Institute-Ashland Campus would be a logical place to establish a business-industrial media center.

Being a relatively new center, the WITI LRC offers a new facility with current existing media, room for expansion and trained personnel.

Rooms for private group study and individualized education are available, while larger meeting rooms can be reserved. A new and attractive feature of WITI is an addition to be completed for the fall of 1980 which contains a conference room with seating capacity for upwards of 200 people and projection capabilities.

WITI's programs in machine tool operation, welding, office education, small business operations, auto mechanics, finance/accounting, tourism, baking/quantity foods and health occupations

parallel the interests of area business/industry, and should foster a sharing of materials. It should also tend to promote a closer relationship between prospective employers and students, with greater articulation concerning training and information needs.

In view of the survey results, the next order of business is to set up an advisory committee for technical research center development, drawing from the contact people who responded favorably to the "sharing concept". A list of priorities in materials, equipment and services should be their first concern, followed closely by the development of acquisition and circulation policies.

The organization of such a center is a major responsibility, but in view of the resulting cost effectiveness and improved caliber of training, it seems worth the attempt.

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SURVEY:

To determine if area businesses and industries need or favor the establishment of a central location for pooling informational media and/or equipment.

NAME OF BUSINESS _____

CONTACT PERSON _____

POSITION OF ABOVE _____

NO. OF EMPLOYEES IN ORGANIZATION _____

1. Is your business engaged in any form of staff training?

   (16) NO (50) YES NA (3)

   If yes, indicate:

   (29) In-Service
   (45) On-The-Job
   (25) Workshops
   (29) Informational Meetings
   (9) Other _____

2. Do you anticipate an expansion of your business' role as educator/trainer?

   (42) NO (24) YES NA (3)

3. Does your business own any of the following audio-visual equipment?

   (15) 16mm (movie) projector
   (7) 8mm (movie) projector
   (25) Slide projector
   (16) Filmstrip projector
   (10) Phonograph
   (30) Cassette player/rec.
   (13) Video (TV) Player/rec.
   (16) Overhead projector
   (9) Opaque projector
   (3) Other _____
   (24) None owned

4. Does your business own any of the following audio-visual software?

   (12) 16mm movies
   (4) 8mm movies
   (13) Slides
   (12) Video Cassettes (TV)
   (28) Cassette tapes
   (8) Records
   (15) Filmstrips
   (11) Transparencies
   ( ) Other _____
   (28) None owned

5. If audio-visual equipment and materials were available for your business' training sessions, would you use them?

   (16) NO (47) YES NA (6)

6. Does your business subscribe to professional magazines or publications?

   (3) NO (60) YES NA (1)

   If yes, please list three examples: _____

   _____

7. Please indicate which staff members use the above publications.

   All-22, Officers-3, Supervisor(s)-2, Director-8

   (2)-6 (3)-7 (4)-3 (5)-4 (6)-1

8. Does your business purchase technical reference materials?

(10) NO (58) YES NA (1)

If yes, indicate:

(48) Manuals (21) Statutes
(39) Directories (6) Other _____
(14) Tables

9. How often must materials specified in number 8 be updated?

(35) Yearly (13) Every 2 years OTHER (6)
(7) Semi-annually (1) Every 5 years NA (1)

10. Does your business have a staff person directly responsible for purchasing, cataloging and circulating educational materials?

(32) NO (31) YES NA (6)

If yes, indicate:

(11) Secretary (3) Other _____
(6) Librarian Director, Mgr. - 11

11. If instructional assistance or resource speakers were available would your business be interested in procuring them?

(17) NO (46) YES NA (6)

12. If a room or laboratory situation for training purposes were made available would your business take advantage of it?

(18) NO (44) YES NA (7)

13. Approximately what amount of money per year does your business spend on reference or audio-visual materials?

(23) Under $200.00 (3) $800.00-$1000.00
(23) $200.00-$500.00 (7) Over $1000.00
(4) $500.00-$800.00 NA (9)

14. Has anyone from your business toured the facility at WITI-Ashland?

(9) NO (57) YES NA (3)

Your comments concerning media/equipment sharing:

Returned as not applicable - 11

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